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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ISLAMABAD 003349

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/22/2018  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [MOPS](#) [EAID](#) [PK](#)  
SUBJECT: NAWAZ'S TENETS FOR WAR ON TERROR

REF: ISLAMABAD 2817

Classified By: Anne W. Patterson for reasons 1.4 (b), (d).

¶1. (C) Summary: The opposition Pakistan Muslim League-N's (PML-N) Nawaz Sharif has submitted a letter to PM Gilani outlining his party's six tenets for any counterterrorism strategy. While blaming the Musharraf administration for misguided policies and claiming a desire for consensus, the letter stressed the need for dialogue with the militants, economic development for the region, and a commitment that Pakistan's territory will not be used for terrorism in any other country. This letter marks Nawaz's first serious foray into policy as leader of the opposition, and it was carefully calibrated to both address U.S. concerns and appeal to the still prevalent public support for negotiations over military action. Information Minister Sherry Rehman is heading up a 16-member multi-party committee to draft a consensus resolution that the GOP hopes the current joint session parliament will unanimously approve. It will be interesting to see if Nawaz's points are included in that resolution. End Summary.

On the Record  
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¶2. (SBU) After more than a week of GOP briefings to a joint sitting of Pakistan's parliament on its counterterrorism strategy, leading opposition party Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz submitted six proposals for a consensus policy. The letter was made public late October 21, the day after it was delivered to Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani. The Pakistan People's Party (PPP)-led government did not have an initial reaction to the points, but has proposed an all parties committee to draft a resolution supporting the GOP's CT strategy. The PPP is hoping such a resolution can be passed unanimously before the end of this atypical joint session.

¶3. (U) According to the PML-N's letter, signed by party leader Nawaz Sharif, the GOP should: (1) adopt a strategy based on comprehensive dialogue with all stakeholders; (2) defend and safeguard Pakistan's sovereignty and territorial integrity; (3) restore governance in the tribal areas keeping in view local customs and social norms; (4) focus on employment generation and socio-economic issues in the frontier areas; (5) develop the Pak-Afghan border into a trade corridor for the region; and (6) ensure no one uses Pakistan's territory for terrorism in any other country. The letter does not further define these points, instead suggesting the formation of a joint parliamentary committee

to "carry out regular reviews" of the government's CT efforts following such points.

¶4. (SBU) Nawaz's letter reportedly criticized the CT policies of the former Musharraf administration. These policies were "short-sighted," without "any consultations or consensus." "The revision was evidently tactical and driven by external compulsions rather than internal dynamics," the letter continues. Nawaz blamed military-led maneuvers for supplanting the civilian administration and undercutting the government's capacity to negotiate a peace.

¶5. (C) Nawaz concluded the letter pledging his full support to the Prime Minister in drafting and implementing a consensus policy. PML-N Spokesman Siddiq ul Farooq claimed to PolOff October 21 that Nawaz's desire for a consensus resolution was earnest. He bragged that enough parties and parliamentarians, including some that had supported PPP leader Asif Zardari for the presidency, so overwhelmingly disagreed with the GOP's perceived reliance on military action that PM Gilani would lose a vote of confidence if it came to a vote. "But we want to support the government," Farooq quickly added.

#### Competing Committees, Competing Plans

¶6. (SBU) Meanwhile, a 16-member multi-partisan committee has been formed to draft a consensus resolution for action by the current joint session. The committee, headed by Information Minister Sherry Rehman and consisting of one representative

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from each of the ruling and opposition parties, planned to meet October 22.

¶7. (C) While leading opposition party PML-N outwardly promised cooperation, competing opposition party Pakistan Muslim League (PML) has openly challenged the GOP's designs. PML has reportedly drafted a competing resolution and has formed eight teams to meet with other political parties to win support. It claimed "positive responses," including from the Muttahida Quami Movement (MQM), which officially sits on the government bench but has not been given federal ministries as yet.

¶8. (C) Comment: The joint parliamentary session that began with a full house to hear the military's security briefing has steadily petered out as fewer and fewer members attend the ongoing sessions. Sherry Rehman and NSA Durrani both reported to us concern that the sessions were generating increased anti-American rhetoric. Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam leader Fazlur Rehman last week led the charge of complaints that the government's use of military force was the only pillar of the GOP's three-part CT strategy that is being employed. Rehman, who is part of the government's coalition, argued strenuously for dialogue and he was joined by some of the FATA parliamentarians whose districts are being pounded by shelling and aerial bombardment. PM Gilani's government relies for its majority on both Fazlur and the FATA parliamentarians, but PML-N's talk of using this resolution to bring down the government is pure bravado for now. Nawaz's letter was his first foray into policy as opposition leader, and it was carefully calibrated to both address U.S. concerns about cross-border attacks and play to continued popular support for negotiations over military action.

PATTERSON